

**Cedar Falls Planning and Zoning Commission
Regular Meeting
May 24, 2023
Cedar Falls, Iowa**

MINUTES

The Cedar Falls Planning and Zoning Commission met in regular session on May 24, 2023 at 5:30 p.m. at City Hall. The following Commission members were present: Alberhasky, Crisman, Grybovych, Larson, Leeper, Lynch and Stalnaker. Hartley and Moser were absent. Karen Howard, Planning and Community Services Manager, and Jaydevsinh Atodaria, Planner I were also present.

- 1.) Chair Lynch noted the Minutes from the May 10, 2023 regular meeting are presented. Ms. Crisman made a motion to approve the Minutes as presented. Ms. Grybovych seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously with 7 ayes (Alberhasky, Crisman, Grybovych, Larson, Leeper, Lynch and Stalnaker), and 0 nays.

- 2.) The first item of business was a Land Use Map amendment from Low Density Residential to Neighborhood Commercial and Mixed Use, as well as a rezoning from C-1 to PC-2 for property at 702 LeClair Street. Chair Lynch introduced the item and Mr. Atodaria provided background information. He explained that the property is located on the corner of West 1st and LeClair Streets and covered background that was discussed at the last meeting. He provided a rendering of the location that showed existing and proposed building locations on the site, as well as landscaping and bike plan. He also showed the future land use map and discussed the proposed changes, speaking about current access from LeClair Street and traffic volume on site. Mr. Atodaria also went over the technical comments that have been brought forward. PC-2 districts require that all site plans in the district be approved by the Planning and Zoning Commission. The applicant will need to submit a site plan application that is consistent with the submitted master plan and district regulations. A development agreement will also be needed at the same time to ensure that all conditions are followed. Staff recommends restricting allowed uses to those uses allowed in the C-1 District and additionally allow one “wholesale business use with associated warehouse space” with a limitation of warehouse space to not exceed 11,000 square feet total. If the undeveloped area south of the proposed storage building is developed in the future, a public sidewalk along the LeClair Street frontage should be constructed that connects to the 1st Street Trail. An access drive will not be granted off West 1st Street and the developer must ensure that the intensity and scale of the “wholesale business use with associated warehouse space” may not increase to a level that the use of the subject property becomes a “wholesaling/warehousing motor freight terminal,” which is prohibited in the PC-2 Planned Commercial District. With these stipulations, staff recommends approval of the land use map amendment and rezoning.

Ms. Grybovych made a motion to approve the land use map amendment. Mr. Leeper seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously with 7 ayes (Alberhasky, Crisman, Grybovych, Larson, Leeper, Lynch and Stalnaker), and 0 nays.

Ms. Grybovych made a motion to approve the rezoning request subject to staff recommendations. Mr. Larson seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously with 7 ayes (Alberhasky, Crisman, Grybovych, Larson, Leeper, Lynch and Stalnaker), and 0 nays.

- 3.) The next item for consideration by the Commission was a zoning code text amendment regarding allowance of vinyl siding in the Downtown Character District. Chair Lynch introduced the item and Ms. Howard provided background information. She explained that the item stems

from a referral from City Council to consider allowing vinyl siding on any new single-unit dwelling and on new construction of other small residential buildings with six or fewer dwelling units (i.e. duplexes, townhomes, small apartment buildings) in the Neighborhood frontage areas of the Downtown Character District. Previously vinyl siding was not allowed in the Central Business District Overlay, but residential neighborhoods outside of the CBD previously had no standards for exterior cladding. The Downtown Character District prohibits the use of vinyl siding in the Urban General, Urban General 2 and Storefront areas. In Neighborhood Frontage areas, vinyl siding is allowed on existing single-family dwellings, even if it is not currently clad in vinyl siding. Existing buildings with vinyl siding can be replaced with the same, and any additions can also be clad with vinyl siding. Ms. Howard displayed the Downtown Character District Regulating Plan that shows where these specific neighborhoods are located. She discussed the options that the Commission has at this time. They may: recommend no change to the current ordinance; amend to allow vinyl siding on single-unit dwellings in the Neighborhood Frontages; amend to allow vinyl siding on residential buildings with six or fewer dwelling units in the Neighborhood Frontages, or any other combination as recommended by the Commission.

Ms. Crisman noted that it is interesting that in the initial conversation it was opted for new builds to require old materials but the old structures could use the newer materials. In driving around the Downtown Character District there's a definite difference between the older and newer buildings and feels that the older materials maintain the character of the district. Mr. Larson stated that he feels that if someone were following that design idea, people might be using asbestos siding. He stated that, with the issue of housing affordability, requiring more expensive siding materials is not a good idea.

Mr. Larson made a motion to approve vinyl siding for single-unit dwellings and residential buildings with six or fewer dwelling units in the Neighborhood Frontages. Ms. Lynch seconded the motion.

After further discussion and concerns expressed by other Commissioners about allowing vinyl siding on new construction of larger buildings, Mr. Larson agreed and withdrew his motion and made a new motion to amend the code to allow vinyl siding on single-unit dwellings and to amend the code to allow vinyl siding on two-unit dwellings as well. Mr. Leeper seconded the motions.

Commission members discussed further comments and concerns with the items.

The motion was approved to allow vinyl siding on single-unit dwellings with 6 ayes (Alberhasky, Grybovych, Larson, Leeper, Lynch and Stalnaker), and 1 nay (Crisman).

The motion was approved to allow vinyl siding on two-unit dwellings (duplexes) with 5 ayes (Alberhasky, Larson, Leeper, Lynch and Stalnaker), and 2 nays (Crisman and Grybovych).

- 4.) The item regarding a communication tower at 4510 Chadwick Road was withdrawn and the Commission moved to the next item, a zoning code text amendment regarding parking and minimum building height for institutional uses in CD-DT. Chair Lynch introduced the item and Ms. Howard provided background information. She explained that the discussion was prompted by an inquiry from St. Patrick's Church about using a vacant lot for a surface parking lot. The property is in the Urban General Frontage of the Downtown Character District. She noted that the church indicated that sometime in the future they may build a new daycare on the site but for now would like to use the entirety of the lot for parking. She noted that accessory uses, such as parking, are not allowed without a principal use in any zone in the City with a few exceptions. She noted that parking area setbacks in most zones are relative to the principal buildings on the site. Also, the two-story minimum building height in the UG, UG2

and Storefront areas may be problematic as well. Ms. Howard displayed an image of an excerpt of the downtown regulating plan to demonstrate how parking setback areas are delineated on the Downtown Character District Regulating Plan. She discussed parking setbacks in other zoning districts as a comparison to the Downtown Character District code. She noted that the question is whether there should be some additional flexibility for parking for civic/institutional uses in the Downtown Character District to allow parking forward of the parking setback lines on the regulating plan. She noted that there are a number of churches and schools in the Downtown Character District with campus-like settings that extend over multiple properties. She noted that institutional uses are important to the character of the neighborhood and this may warrant different rules, but it is important to ensure surrounding development is respected. This might be achieved by creating a landscaped buffer between parking areas and public sidewalks and adjacent properties. She also discussed the pros and cons of the minimum two-story height standard and spoke about solutions that could allow for more flexibility for Civic and Institutional uses. At this time the item will be for discussion by the Commission.

Mr. Larson made a motion to set a public hearing for the June 14, 2023 meeting. Ms. Crisman seconded the motion.

Mr. Leeper stated that he struggles with this request and is concerned about making all sorts of exceptions to the rules in the new code. He feels it sets a bad precedent.

Mr. Larson likes the points of challenge with the new code as they give an opportunity to consider all options, but he also feels that after going through the exhaustive process of creating the zoning code that it's important to stick to it. He believes that the parking matter, regardless of how you feel about it, drives the building height situation. He also feels that public/non-profit and private development sectors should follow the same rules.

Ms. Crisman feels that the whole vibe of the downtown area is the character of density so starting to make exceptions will undo that. She would like to stay with the current rules and let them work as they are.

Ms. Lynch agreed with the previous sentiments.

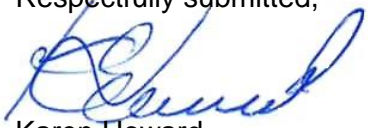
Mr. Larson asked about potentially coming up with a formula for height exceptions to allow for consideration of individual projects based on the size of the site being considered.

After further discussion, Mr. Larson revised his motion to set the date for a public hearing for the parking amendments only and to leave the question of minimum height until a later date. Ms. Crisman seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously with 7 ayes (Alberhasky, Crisman, Grybovych, Larson, Leeper, Lynch and Stalnaker), and 0 nays.

- 5.) As there were no further comments, Mr. Leeper made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Grybovych seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously with 7 ayes (Alberhasky, Crisman, Grybovych, Larson, Leeper, Lynch and Stalnaker), and 0 nays.

The meeting adjourned at 6:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


Karen Howard
Community Services Manager


Joanne Goodrich
Administrative Assistant